

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

1. A reporting system for creating a report, wherein the report may specify one or more prompt objects as properties of the report, comprising:
  - 5 an inner prompt object comprising a first question to be asked of a user and at least one validation property; and
  - an outer prompt object comprising a second question to be asked of a user and at least one validation property;
  - wherein the inner prompt object is nested within the outer prompt object.
- 10 2. The system according to claim 1, further comprising:
  - a first answer provided by a user to the first question of the inner prompt object;
  - and
  - a second answer provided by a user to the second question of the outer prompt object.
- 15 3. The system according to claim 2, wherein the first answer to the first question of the inner prompt object serves as a validation property to the second answer to the second question of the outer prompt object.
4. The system according to claim 1, wherein the inner and outer prompt objects are embedded in a draft prompt.
- 20 5. The system according to claim 1 wherein the inner prompt is used as part of a definition of a plurality of outer prompts.

6. A method of creating a report to be executed on a reporting system comprising the steps of:

selecting a template with one or more template properties;

selecting a filter with one or more filter properties; and

5 specifying one or more of the template or filter properties with an inner prompt object and an outer prompt object;

wherein the inner prompt object comprises a first question to be asked of a user and at least one validation property; and

10 further wherein the outer prompt object comprises a second question to be asked of a user and at least one validation property.

7. The method according to claim 6, further comprising the steps of:

providing a first answer to the first question of the inner prompt object; and

providing a second answer to the second question of the outer prompt object.

8. The method according to claim 7, wherein the first answer to the first question of the inner prompt object serves as a validation property to the second answer of the second question of the outer prompt object.

9. The method according to claim 6, wherein the inner and outer prompt objects are embedded in a draft prompt.

10. The method according to claim 6 wherein the inner prompt is used as part of a definition of a plurality of outer prompts.

11. A processor-readable medium comprising code for execution by a processor to create a report to be executed on a reporting system, the medium comprising:

code for causing a processor to enable a user to select a template with one or more template properties;

code for causing a processor to enable a user to select a filter with one or more filter properties; and

5 code for causing a processor to enable a user to specify one or more of the template or filter properties with an inner prompt object and an outer prompt object;

wherein the inner prompt object comprises a first question to be asked of a user and at least one validation property; and

further wherein the outer prompt object comprises a second question to be asked  
10 of a user and at least one validation property.

12. The medium according to claim 11, further comprising:

a first answer provided by a user to the first question of the inner prompt object;

and

a second answer provided by a user to the second question of the outer prompt

15 object.

13. The medium according to claim 12, wherein the first answer to the first question of the inner prompt object serves as a validation property to the second answer to the second question of the outer prompt object.

14. The medium according to claim 11, wherein the inner and outer prompt  
20 objects are embedded in a draft prompt.

15. The medium according to claim 11 wherein the inner prompt is used as part of a definition of a plurality of outer prompts.

16 A nested prompt object used in creating a report to be executed in a reporting system, wherein the report may specify a prompt object as a property of the report, the nested prompt object comprising an outer prompt object that comprises:

a question to be asked of a user;

5 at least one validation property; and

wherein at least one of the question and the at least one validation property is defined by an inner prompt object.

17. The nested prompt object of claim 16, further comprising:

a first answer provided by a user to the first question of the inner prompt object;

10 and

a second answer provided by a user to the second question of the outer prompt object.

18. The nested prompt object of claim 17, wherein the first answer to the first question of the inner prompt object serves as a validation property to the second answer to the second question of the outer prompt object.

19. The nested prompt object of claim 16, wherein the inner and outer prompt objects are embedded in a draft prompt.

20. The nested prompt object of claim 16, wherein the inner prompt is used as part of a definition of a plurality of outer prompts.